

5/25/2016

Daniel Myers
4040 Amanda Ct
Canton, MI 48188

RE: Senate Veteran's Committee Hearing regarding SB 817, a bill to extend free Michigan fishing licenses to all active duty members of the military as well as all honorably discharged veterans, regardless of whether they live in Michigan or not.

Good afternoon and thank you for allowing me to address this Committee on this important topic. In April 2015 my son returned from deployment in the Middle East. He was officially on active duty until the end of May 2015. My son, born in Michigan and currently a Minnesota resident, planned to visit me in Michigan while still on active duty. I assumed he would not have to purchase a fishing license while still on active duty serving our country. To be safe I sent an inquiry to the Michigan DNR asking if he would have to buy a Michigan fishing license while he is on active duty. The answer I received is as follows "Yes, your son would have to purchase a non-resident fishing license. If he was a Michigan resident and on active duty, he would be eligible to obtain a free fishing license or non-resident military stationed in Michigan he could obtain licenses at the resident rate; however, we have no programs that cover non-resident active duty military not stationed in Michigan."

I can't tell you how disappointed I was in the State of Michigan at that moment. Somehow a Soldier that was deployed to the Middle East and from another State is not valued in the State of Michigan. This is not as much an issue with the cost of the license as it is a lack of respect for our Military. Our Soldiers are serving the entire Country not just the State in which they are a resident. The sacrifices made by our active duty Military are immeasurable. In addition to the daily risks he was subjected too while in the Middle East, my son was over 7000 miles away from home when his first child was born. We need to respect and honor all of the Soldiers that risk their lives for the freedom we cherish so much.

A free fishing license for Members of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty, regardless of the state which they are a resident, is the least we can do to honor their service.

For reference:

In Ohio: Members of the U.S. Armed Forces on active duty while on leave or furlough do not require a fishing license.

Typically a Leave Authorization Form, a copy of their orders or a DD214 form indicating their active duty status need to be presented if stopped by a DNR Officer.